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*The Peace Conference at the Hague and its Bearings on International Law and Policy.* By FREDERICK W. HOLLS, D.C.L. (New York: The Macmillan Co. 1900. Pp. xxiv, 572.)

THE author of this book is a member of the New York bar and was secretary of the delegation from the United States to the Peace Conference at the Hague. He is described on the title-page as "a member of the Conference," which is not exact, for while he was permitted to take part in its discussions he had no authority to sign on behalf of our government. Nevertheless he was active in the work of the Conference and represented the United States in the *Comité d'Examen* which framed the Convention for the peaceful adjustment of international differences. He tells us that at a critical stage of the proceedings, when the reluctance of the German government to co-operate in the establishment of a permanent court of arbitration seemed likely to wreck the Conference, he accompanied Dr. Zorn of the German delegation to Berlin, consulted with Prince Hohenlohe and Count von Bülow, and succeeded in averting the crisis. It would certainly seem therefore, from a perusal of his book, that no one of the persons present, certainly none of those representing the government of the United States, had better opportunities than the author for observing what passed at the Hague and for learning the true motives that actuated the several governments.

Unfortunately, Mr. Holls has felt bound to observe a very disappointing silence on many of the topics upon which he might have been expected to be most interesting and instructive. It is apparent that in relating the history of the Conference he has been hampered at every turn by what he calls "the necessarily restricted limits open to members." Nor does this embarrassment exhibit itself only in the rather significant omissions from his narrative. It is even more apparent in the tone of eager, one might almost say indiscriminate, eulogy, bestowed upon every person and thing connected with the Conference. The building in which it met, the arrangements for conducting business, the luncheons set before the delegates, the handwriting of the Final Act, are all in turn the subjects of enthusiastic praise. This man's speech is "most eloquent and brilliant," the other man's is "of great force and beauty." This delegate is distinguished by "noble idealism," the next by "sound judgment," the next by "unerring prudence," the next by "perfection of decision and tact." The only unamiable word for which the author finds occasion, except when he speaks of those who thought ill of the Conference, is in connection with the Fourth of July celebration at Delft. He is compelled to admit that upon that day the weather was "inclement"; but he makes amends by adding that it "moderated" in the afternoon.

The author has also apparently considered that the limits of his work could not with propriety be extended so as to embrace any events occurring since the adjournment of the Conference. He has not even informed us of the fate of any of the measures adopted by it. Three "Conventions" and three "Declarations" were voted by a majority of the Powers

represented, but each of these six proposed contracts expressly provided that they might be signed at a later date by any of the other parties. Neither the second convention, with respect to the laws and customs of war on land, nor the third convention, for the adaptation to maritime warfare of the Geneva Convention of August 22, 1864, was signed at the time by the United States, or by Germany, or Austria, or Great Britain. Have they been signed or ratified since. Mr. Holls does not tell us. And why did these, the chief naval and military powers of the world, then decline to join in these important treaties?

So with respect to the first and most important convention, for the peaceful adjustment of international differences. The fact is (although it is not stated in Mr. Holls's book) that that convention has now been ratified by all the powers which were represented at the Conference, except China, Greece, Luxemburg, Mexico, Persia, Servia, Switzerland, Turkey and Bulgaria. This curious agglomeration of non-Christian and weak Christian nations must have some significance. Why did these particular countries delay giving a final assent to a treaty which was designed to substitute justice and reason in the place of force? And why did the strongest and most warlike nations so readily accept it?

Such are some of the questions which Mr. Holls's book suggests, and which he has apparently thought himself bound to leave unanswered. It is the more to be regretted, because he is evidently competent to deal with these subjects, as his interesting work clearly shows. If we criticize it, it is because there is not more of it.

The purpose of the book, as declared in the preface, is to give "the story of the Conference and a description of its work" especially for American and English readers. Accordingly, the author in his first two chapters gives an account of the calling of the Conference and of its first meeting. The text of the official circulars of invitation is given in full, as are also the ceremonial addresses at the opening. A complete list of the members, with brief biographical notes as to each, should prove useful.

The next three chapters deal in turn with the work of the three committees into which the conference divided itself. The recommendations of the several committees are considered point by point, and are elucidated by the author's comments and explanations, and by copious extracts from the discussions in committee or in the full Conference. The sixth chapter relates the unsuccessful efforts made by the delegates from the United States to secure action upon the question of immunity of private property upon the high seas, a subject upon which agreement proved impossible, and which was "referred to a future Conference." These four chapters are the best in the book. The comments and debates on the various provisions recommended are vivid and instructive, and indeed are essential to a clear understanding of what was accomplished.

The seventh chapter treats of "The Conference from Day to Day," and the eighth chapter closes the book with a discussion as to the bearings of the Conference upon international law and policy. In an ap-

pendix, the full text of all the conventions, declarations and final resolutions are given in the original French, accompanied by a careful English translation in parallel columns; also the full text of the reports made by the individual members of the American delegation, the report of the delegation itself to the Secretary of State, and finally, the addresses delivered at the tomb of Grotius in the Great Church of Delft on the rainy Fourth of July, 1899.

Looking at the tangible results of the Conference, one is naturally led to ask what is likely to be the practical value of its work. Mr. Holls answers the question without the very least hesitation. He "frankly avows his conviction that the peace Conference accomplished a great and glorious result, not only in the humanizing of warfare and the codification of the laws of war, but, above all, in the promulgation of the Magna Charta of International Law." He believes that a long first step has been taken towards the establishment of a system that will substitute law for force in international relations; and that, as a result, "the glamour of the supposed strength of reactionary government, or of the comforts of superstition will be gone, Faith will revive, the 'struggle of the soul' will be won, and general discontent, the basis of all unrest, must correspondingly diminish."

One may be permitted to doubt whether these tremendous results are likely to be achieved, even if all the recommendations of the Conference meet with general and loyal support; but that its recommendations may be made to produce permanent results of great value, is, no doubt, highly probable. The most striking and beneficent feature of the proposed agreement is to be found in the fact that the signatory Powers in effect declare that no war can hereafter be justified until good offices and mediation and arbitration have all been tried and have all failed. No one can as yet foresee how effectual this declaration will prove. But if the work of the Conference shall only tend to turn public attention in times of excitement towards the means by which war may honorably be averted,—if it only serves to point out several paths by which contending nations may find a way to peace,—it will have accomplished a task for which all nations may rightly praise it.

It remains only to be said of the book under review that it is well printed, is reasonably free from typographical errors,—*procès verbeaux* being perhaps the worst,—and that it is furnished with an adequate index.

GEORGE L. RIVES.

*Cabot Bibliography, with an Introductory Essay on the Careers of the Cabots, based upon an Independent Examination of the Sources of Information.* By GEORGE PARKER WINSHIP. (New York: Dodd, Mead and Co.; London: Henry Stevens, Son and Stiles. 1900. Pp. lii, 180.)

THIS handsome volume is an expansion of Mr. Winship's "Bibliography" published in 1897. Every student of early American history